Chapter -93

Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement! ˣ

'*It's all about me!*'

Altered the GREAT GAME.

Players aren't meant to even be able to affect the GREAT GAME, but here you are, adding new Rules as though you run this ship. But you don't!

That being said, we're happy to see you chose to only make things more difficult for your World. We had projected about 150 million Players to survive the First GAME Event and 50 to survive the Second. Now that everyone has only a day to prepare and level up, it's looking like just shy of 1 million will come out alive on the other side.

Your decision has doomed your species to an early extinction. Congratulations.

Here's a crown for the King of Stupid.

Reward: '*Paper Crown*'

'Paper Crown' ˣ

A crown of paper marking you as the King of Stupid.

Wearing this on your head makes all Players within sight inclined to hurt you.

Weight: 0.01 Pandas

I grumbled at the achievement and the fast-food-restaurant-birthday-party-looking crown that appeared in my hands. Normally I would have torn it to shreds and tossed it to the wind, but I threw it in my inventory since I could think of some uses for it.

Bee and I were finally on the move again, but the damn beacon on my head was already attracting attention towards us. It seemed fairly obvious that most of the people in the Madeville area was heading to Castleburg, and the two glowing beacons in a row had drawn them into our path.

I'd already activated my new 'Personal Rule' passive and given myself Cheat Death, though I doubted I'd actually need it, since I'd been fine thus far.

With a kickflip, I leapt off the ground on my longboard, catching its wheels on a broken lamppost and grinding along it, much to the excitement of the board.

[SPECTACULAR!]

A spinning arrow whistled above my head from one of our pursuers, but Bee was doing a good job returning fire from the air. We'd killed two Players thus far, but it barely scratched their numbers.

Fortunately, the various groups didn't work together, which we were using to our advantage, running them into one another and causing impromptu skirmishes to unfold.

I hopped off the lamppost and hit the roof of a car, which inexplicably sent me skyward with a bounce. Having built up enough momentum through chaining several tricks together, I was able to fly high enough to land atop the edge of a five-story apartment building and continue grinding along the gutter, which really created a lot of distance to our pursuers.

"Turn right here!" Bee yelled as she swooped down towards me, keeping us on target by tracking the streets from the air. For some reason, Panda was sitting on her shoulder instead of mine.

Flipping my board as I reached the corner of the building, I was able to instantly change the direction of my momentum.

"This thing wasn't kidding when it said that it broke physics."

Down below me were Players who were being overrun by monsters coming out of a barbeque restaurant and breathing scented smoke and fire, setting the whole street ablaze.

"Left!" Bee yelled and I quickly scanned the gutter I was still grinding along for a way to ramp over to the apartment building on the other side.

Before I could figure out what to do, two arms caught me and lifted me across the fifty-foot gap. The longboard was stuck to the bottom of my soles as I soared through the air.

I craned my neck around to thank Bee for the assist.

Except… it wasn't Bee.

I was body-slammed into the flat stone roof of the building and the board disappeared off my feet from the damage. The back of my head was the first to hit and it rang like a church bell. My Carapace Suit was also sanded to a nice polish, as I tore across the roof with my attacker pinning me down, while he himself remained in the air.
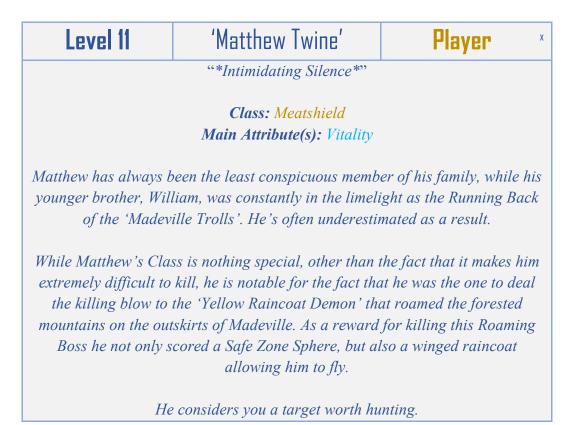
He wore a yellow raincoat with the hood up, totally obscuring his face in shadow, though two white perfectly-round eyes stared back at me from within. Fluffy grey-white angel wings sprouted from his back and he wore green rubber boots with frog faces on the front.

Before we could even come to a rest, Bee flew in from the side and tore the guy off of me. They stumbled over each other, rolling again-and-again. As soon as they came to a halt, Bee was the first on her feet and she released a point-blank Moth Missile into his prone body.

Raincoat Guy took all four hits, but somehow still got to his feet, before flapping his wings once to send himself backwards off the edge.

"Who was that!?" I asked her, running over to where she stood on the edge, trying to shoot Beetle Bolts after him as he fled down the street, flying low to use the piled-up cars as cover.

"I managed to appraise him," she said.

Level 11	'Matthew Twine'	Player	x

"*Intimidating Silence*"

Class: *Meatshield*
Main Attribute(s): *Vitality*

Matthew has always been the least conspicuous member of his family, while his younger brother, William, was constantly in the limelight as the Running Back of the 'Madeville Trolls'. He's often underestimated as a result.

While Matthew's Class is nothing special, other than the fact that it makes him extremely difficult to kill, he is notable for the fact that he was the one to deal the killing blow to the 'Yellow Raincoat Demon' that roamed the forested mountains on the outskirts of Madeville. As a reward for killing this Roaming Boss he not only scored a Safe Zone Sphere, but also a winged raincoat allowing him to fly.

He considers you a target worth hunting.

"Wasn't William Twine the guy who'd turned into a Satyr?" Panda asked.

I shrugged. "No idea."

"I remember the name from the screens we watched during the first Event," Bee said.

"If he comes back, I'll try my new punch on him," I said.

"Looks like he's running away pretty fast," Panda said.

"Well, in that case, let's take a break."

"Here?" Bee asked, looking around.

"Did you see any other fliers?"

"No."

"Then it should be fine."

"You've still got a big-ass beacon above your head…" Panda pointed out.

I sat down and pulled up my new Status screen, ignoring him:

Level -20	'Gambit'	*Game.changer( )* ˣ
STATS		
Health: Isn't It Great?	**Stamina:** いいな	**Armor:** Dinner Plate Armor
Carry Weight: 1050 Pandas	**Top Speed:** Racing Bike	**Mana:** !əM duЯ

ATTRIBUTES			
Strength: 2415 lbs.	**Dexterity:** Death Adder	**Intelligence:** ☺	**Vitality:** Brisket
Athleticism: 獺	**Perception:** 917	**Wisdom:** (ノ°□°)ノ	**Defense:** Ceramic

ABILITIES	CORE	PASSIVES
'I_CAN_FLY'	'unHaunt	'Glitch'
'Dungeon-Break'	'unHero'	'Insanity'
'.interrupt( )'	'unVirtuous'	'Inanimate Voices'
'Skater Boy'		'Math.multiply(Punch)'
'There's No Escape'	**ULTIMATE**	'BIRTHDAY_SUIT'
'Giant-Slayer Soul Blade'	'Game.newRule( )'	'Reflective Shell'
'[Injection]'		'I-Frames'
'Punch.spinTheWheel( )'		'Transition Lenses'
		'Outcast'
		'Personal Rule'

"Wait, look! I've got numbers for my Perception now!"

Bee looked at the screen after I shared it and said, "It's over 300 times more than mine."

"I'm just *really* observant."

"It's probably a tracker for all the things you failed to notice or something," Panda guessed.

"Maybe it doesn't matter if he gets an ability that scales off his Perception."

"That would be really broken," I replied thoughtfully.

Panda shook his head.

"The Skill Cube's timer should be done now, by the way," Bee then said.

"Finally!" I replied in excitement, pulling the cube out of my inventory.

'**Unique Skill Cube**'	x
The puzzle has been solved and the unlock timer has ended. *-Open?-*	
Weight: 1 Panda	

The Rubik's Cube with the many symbols on it was still arranged in the way that Bee had solved it, but now a purple light was shining through the cracks, and with just the slightest pull, it unfolded into the shape of a flower. A single purple wisp sat in the center and I poked it with my finger, immediately unlocking a new skill.

'**Time Save**'	x
Unique Ability *Simple, yet undeniably-powerful.* *Do you like the irony of how long it took you to solve the puzzle versus the reward? We felt like we had to spell it out for you, since you might not have realized how funny we are.*	

> *Resets all cooldowns.*
>
> *Cooldown: 24 hours*
>
> **This ability appears on your Appraisal!**

"Wow!" Bee said as I shared the ability with her. "That was really worth the wait!"

"A reset button is definitely gonna come in handy," Panda remarked.

Before I could respond, a personal announcement arrived:

BENEFACTOR CHANGE ALERT!

'Miranda' has been outbid by your new Benefactor: 'The Pro-Glitch Confederation'

"Well damn, I've just been sold to a new owner," I said.

"'*The Pro-Glitch Confederation*'…" Panda read aloud, sounding suspicious.

Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement! ˣ
'*Under New Management*'
Receive a new Benefactor.
*Most Players won't even see their first Benefactor until sometime during or after the Second GAME Event, and you're already on to number two… You're really just speedrunning all these milestones, aren't you? But you know what they say, '**The Candle that burns twice as bright, burns half as long**'.*
Also, fair warning, The Pro-Glitch Confederation are a bunch of idealists that don't mind tossing away promising Players for a chance to upset the balance of the GREAT GAME.
Reward: 30x '*Game Coins*'

"Pot calling kettle black," I muttered, just as the first message rolled in from my new Benefactor.

Benefactor Quest
This is a Quest given to you by your Benefactor.
Failure to complete the Quest will result in a penalty *of the Benefactor's choosing.*
Hello Gambit.
Big fan of your work. You're really making waves. We're going to help you make a real difference! Trust us that we know how to put a stick in the wheel of the Agencies, and in return you'll be greatly compensated.
There is an Agency Nest hiding beneath the Mayor of Castleburg's house.
Destroy it.
Schmaical Schmackson,
Vice-President of TPGC
Reward: 300x '*Game Coins*'

I frowned. "They immediately gave me a quest."

"It's where we're heading though," Bee said. "Maybe they're really aligned with your cause."

Panda put his fingerless arm on her head. "For once I think Gambit's hunch is right."

"This has total 'How do you do, fellow kids?' vibes all over it. It also just feels wrong to do it because they told me to."

"You were okay with stripping for your Mistress," Panda pointed out.

"I think you're being too paranoid," she replied.

"*Meow.*"

"Even *you* agree with her, Lordie!? Traitor!" I yelled, pulling the hand-spider off my head and shaking it angrily.

"Stop that!" Panda told me. "You'll kill yourself!"

Bee caught my arm. "Let's just go to the Mayor's house first, then we'll see if the Pro-Glitch people are posers or the real deal."

"Fine," I said, putting Lordie back on my head.

"*Me-ow!!*"

"Sorry for shaking you. But you're still a traitor."